

Hansen wrongly asserts that these policies were imposed top-down and would harm good stewardship of our public lands. Nothing could be further from the truth. IN both the Yellowstone and Grand Canyon cases, the Park Service was responding to a public outcry, so the new policies in fact largely emerged from the grassroots.

Moreover, most people who visit either park don't use the machines. Instead, they walk, hike, ski, ride horses or mules, or take the family car, public transportation or, in Yellowstone, the quieter snow coach tours.

By contrast, of the 130,000 miles of snowmobile trails in the continental United States, only 670 miles are in the national parks. So Hansen's assertion that efforts to protect the parks' tranquility somehow restrict public access are just plain bizarre.

Our beloved national parks must be preserved for future generations, not sacrificed for short-term political gamesmanship.

Mr. President, as a Texan you know one of the greatest qualities about the West is the pockets of public land where it's still possible to find a little peace and quiet. Please don't ruin that irreplaceable experience at our national parks. The ban on loud, intrusive machines in these awe-inspiring wonderlands should remain.

#### A TRIBUTE IN MEMORY OF DR. BENJAMIN MAJOR, OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA

#### HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 30, 2001*

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, it is with a great sense of loss that I rise to pay tribute to Dr. Benjamin Major, a prominent Bay Area physician, who passed on January 4, 2001, in Kensington, California.

Dr. Major was a graduate of Fisk University and graduated from Meharry Medical College at the age of 21. After completing an internship and residency in Obstetrics and Gynecology at Homer G. Phillips Hospital in St. Louis, he served honorably as a Captain in the U.S. Air Force Medical Corp.

Dr. Major began his private practice in Oakland in 1953 and eventually opened The Arlington Medical Group in 1957.

Dr. Major was active in the community and the field of medicine locally, nationally and internationally. During his career, he was a consultant Obstetrician to the City of Nairobi and the Family Planning Association of Kenya through the World Health Organization, was a diplomat of the American Board of Obstetrics and Gynecology and a Fellow of the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology.

He later received a Ford Foundation mid-career scholarship in 1969 and obtained a Masters of Public Health in Maternal Child Health and Family Planning from UC Berkeley in 1970.

Even though he retired from practice in 1987, he continued to serve as a consultant and instructor in family planning at several agencies and facilities throughout Northern California.

Additionally, Dr. Major served the community by being a member of several organizations. These organizations include the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology, the National Medical Association, the California Medical Association, the Golden State

Medical Association, the Sinkler-Miller Medical Association, the St. Luke's Society, the National Family Planning Council, the NAACP, and the Sigma Pi Phi Fraternity.

Dr. Major's contributions throughout the world and at home will remain his lasting legacy. My thoughts and prayers are with his family, friends, patients and colleagues this day.

#### COMPENSATION FOR VETS DISABLED WHILE IN VA CARE

#### HON. PATSY T. MINK

OF HAWAII

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 30, 2001*

Mrs. MINK of Hawaii. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce an important piece of legislation to allow veterans disabled by treatment or vocational rehabilitation to receive compensation from the day they were disabled while under VA care.

The occurrence of medical malpractice in which veterans are disabled while under Veterans Affairs' care is rare compared with the total number of veterans served every year. In 1997, the last year in which data was available, there were 826,846 inpatients treated and 32,640,000 outpatient visits at VA medical centers at a cost of \$17.149 billion. There are 173 VA medical centers, more than 391 outpatient and outreach clinics, 131 nursing home care units and 39 domiciliaries.

Without this network of government run VA hospitals, clinics and nursing care units, many veterans would never receive the care available to them. However, it is clear that the care provided is not always of the highest quality. Worse than inadequate care are the instances in which veterans receive care that leaves them further disabled.

Since 1990, 9,597 administrative malpractice claims were filed by veterans with VA and 2,134 were settled. The total amount paid in claims settled was nearly \$1.73 million. During the same time period, 2,064 veterans filed court claims against VA. 626 of these court claims were dismissed, the U.S. won 272, and plaintiffs won 129 court claims for a total of \$65,858,110. The VA settled 1,315 VA cases out of court by VA, in the amount of \$253,464,632.

In 1958 Congress established section 1151 of title 38, United States Code, Benefits for Persons Disabled by Treatment or Vocational Rehabilitation. Along with section 1151, section 5110 of the same title established the effective date of an award for disability incurred during treatment or vocational rehabilitation. These two sections ensured that veterans disabled by their treatment received compensation. This was the fair and right thing to do.

A close review of these sections reveals an inconsistency. While the United States Code allowed compensation for veterans disabled by treatment or vocational rehabilitation, it established an arbitrary cut off date of one year to deny individuals full compensation. Individuals who are unable or not aware of this arbitrary application date for medical malpractice claims should not be denied full compensation for administrative reasons. Statutes of limitations like this are important for preserving the rights of individuals but the VA should be held to a different standard.

Veterans who prove that they were disabled while under the care of Veterans Affairs should be compensated from the day of their injury regardless of their date of application. This bill will repeal United State Code section 5110 which allows Veterans Affairs to avoid its responsibility to veterans it disables during treatment or vocational rehabilitation. The bill also allows veterans who did not receive full and fair compensation from the date of their injury to receive this compensation upon enactment of this bill.

I urge my colleagues to end this unfair practice by cosponsoring this bill.

#### TRIBUTE TO ROBERT ROBIE, OUTGOING CHAIRMAN, INLAND EMPIRE ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP

#### HON. KEN CALVERT

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 30, 2001*

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and pay tribute to an individual whose dedication to the community and to the overall well-being of California's Inland Empire is unparalleled. The Inland Empire has been fortunate to have dynamic and dedicated business community leaders who willingly and unselfishly give time and talent to making their communities a better place to live and work. Mr. Robert Robie is one of these individuals.

On January 20, 2001, Robert Robie was honored as the outgoing 2000 Chairman of the Inland Empire Economic Partnership (IEEP). Through Mr. Robie's efforts over the past year at the IEEP the Inland Empire has seen: The creation of 1,360 jobs and retention of 390 jobs, which resulted in a \$133,039,011 financial investment into the local communities; the implementation of "CallPoint," a one-stop workforce recruiting program that helps employers find and train qualified workers; the implementation of a new Bio-Tech/High-Tech program, which supports the high technology industry; the development of a Tourism Brochure and a Regional Visitor's Guide; the issuance of 306 film permits that resulted in 993 film related projects in the Inland Empire; the addition of twenty-six IEEP members; and the development of an Inland Empire supplement to the May 2001 Forbes Magazine U.S. and Global Issues edition.

As IEEP's 2000 Chairman, Robert brought his 38 years in the banking industry to the table for the Inland Empire. He is currently the Executive Vice President and Chief Credit Officer for the Bank of Hemet in Riverside, Chairman of the Directors' Loan Committee, Director of the Banklink Corporation, Director of the Hemet Service Corporation and Director of Florida Avenue Investment, Inc. Robert Robie's contributions to the nation's positive perception of the Inland Empire as a viable business location has been sizeable.

Robert's activities in the community also include being on the board of the Greater Riverside Chambers of Commerce, the Children's Fund of San Bernardino County Children's Network, and the Riverside Community Hospital Foundation. Additionally, he was the 2000 Chairman of the Executive 2000 Council of the Riverside County Community Hospital Foundation.

His outstanding work to promote the businesses, schools and community organizations